

IX.B.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Hartford

TO BE PROPOSED:
June 14, 2017

WHEREAS, Adult education exemplifies the concept of lifelong learning with nearly ten thousand Connecticut residents in adult basic education/secondary school completion programs and nearly twelve thousand Connecticut residents in English as a Second Language (ESL) and U.S. citizenship preparation programs; and

WHEREAS, The Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education (CAACE), through its CAACE Student Award, recognized five individuals who have overcome numerous obstacles and hardships to persist and succeed in adult education; and

WHEREAS, These individuals exemplify the spirit and determination necessary to achieve a goal and serve as role models to all adult and young learners in our communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Connecticut State Board of Education recognizes the following individuals for their accomplishments in this major adult education endeavor:

Andrea Gamble	Windsor Adult Education
Saul Hernandez	East Shore Region Adult and Continuing Education
Juan Lopez	Stamford Adult Education
Michael Reid	Manchester Adult Education
Bizhong Zhang	Vernon Regional Adult Based Education

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____ this fourteenth day of June, Two Thousand Seventeen.

Signed: _____
Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 14, 2017

SUBJECT: Recognition of the Connecticut Association of Adult and Continuing Education (CAACE) Student Award Winners

Executive Summary

Introduction

Adult education is an essential component of Connecticut's lifelong educational system, providing individuals with instruction in U.S. citizenship, English as a Second Language (ESL), basic skills and secondary completion. In the 2016-17 school year, nearly ten thousand individuals were enrolled in adult basic education/secondary school completion programs and nearly twelve thousand individuals were enrolled in ESL and U.S. citizenship preparation programs. In order to persist and succeed in adult education, many of these learners face substantial challenges to balance their life activities.

History/Background

The Connecticut Association of Adult and Continuing Education (CAACE) honored five individuals from Connecticut's adult education programs on March 30, 2017, for their perseverance and accomplishments. We would like to acknowledge these individuals for their efforts and recognize them as excellent examples of lifelong learning for all students in the adult education system.

Recommendation and Justification

I recommend that the State Board of Education recognize the following individuals for their accomplishments:

Andrea Gamble
Windsor Adult Education

In the fall of 2009, Ms. Gamble began her educational journey and enrolled in the daytime Adult Basic Education program. From the day she walked through the program doors to register, she showed commitment and always arrived to school on time with an open mind for learning. She continued preparing for the GED® exam by enrolling every semester. In the middle of the spring 2012 semester, Ms. Gamble returned to her home country of Jamaica. Upon her return to Connecticut in 2015, she began the National External Diploma Program and earned a high school diploma in January 2016. In July 2016, she then enrolled at Capital Community College and earned a Certified Nursing Certification in August and currently works as a Certified Nursing Assistant. Ms. Gamble plans to stay committed to her educational goals. She continues to take courses in the health field with the objective of obtaining a Registered Nursing Degree.

Saul Hernandez
East Shore Region Adult and
Continuing Education (ERACE)

In September 2003, Mr. Hernandez began ESL classes at the ERACE program. Originally from El Salvador, he decided that he should come to the United States for a better life, to obtain a job and find a safe place to have a family. Due to his inability to begin high school in El Salvador, Mr. Hernandez has had to learn many academic tasks for the first time and learn a second language. Mr. Hernandez recently completed four concurrent ESL classes, while working a second shift, full-time job.

In each class, he has perfect attendance. Since his first registration date, Mr. Hernandez has completed 29 classes and is registered for four more this semester. As a testament to his perseverance and dedication to learning, he recently received notification that an article he has written on “overcoming obstacles” was accepted for publication in the next edition of the *Change Agent, an Adult Education Magazine for Social Justice*.

Juan Lopez
Stamford Adult Education

In 2001, at the age of 14, Mr. Lopez came to the United States from Guatemala. He left school and began to work. After several years, he married and had two children. After his first child was born, he realized that he was learning grammar and vocabulary, but recognized his limited command of English and its impact. Once his work opportunities improved, furthering his language development became his first priority. In 2015, he decided to enroll in the Adult High School Credit Diploma program. He had moments of frustration and doubt, but his teachers and family motivated him. Having received his high school diploma in December of 2016, Mr. Lopez plans to attend Norwalk Community College and pursue a degree in Business Administration.

Michael Reid
Manchester Adult Education

In the spring of 2012, at the age of 18, Mr. Reid enrolled in Manchester Adult Education. He was full of energy, ideas and dreams; however, he lacked the maturity to have the success he was in search of. At the age of 20, Mr. Reid was unemployed and distracted from his educational goals. He encountered crisis after crisis in his young life. He finally realized his surroundings were not a reflection of who he was, nor who he wanted to evolve into as he continued to grow. Despite roadblocks, Mr. Reid has stayed focused and determined to reach his goals. Due to his perfect attendance and diligence, Mr. Reid will graduate in June and has been chosen as the class speaker for the Class of 2017.

**Bizhong Zhang
Vernon Regional Adult Based
Education (VRABE)**

As a student from China, Mr. Zhang did not have trouble acclimating to a foreign culture. As an opportunity to explore new options, he enthusiastically seized every moment, delved into the culture and gave back to the community. As he quickly mastered the levels of VRABE's ESL program, Mr. Zhang made many friends. He also contributed to the community by giving an outstanding presentation on Kunqu, a type of Chinese opera, and offered eight weeks of Chinese lessons to local teachers, who were delighted to acquire interesting cultural facts. To continue nourishing his eclectic interests and curiosity, Mr. Zhang is presently enrolled in a national ServSafe training and certification program.

Prepared by: Sabrina Mancini, Education Consultant
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Approved by: Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer